

Naval Surface Fire Support

Discussion

EMW places unprecedented demands on Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) for range, accuracy, and responsiveness. Sea-based fires will be challenged to support expeditionary operations and integrate fires with the Joint force over an extended battlespace. The Navy has developed a two-phase modernization program to upgrade NSFS capabilities. Phase One includes improving and upgrading capabilities of the CG-47/52 and DDG-51 Class ships. Phase Two is the new land-attack destroyer, DD 21, and its associated weapons systems.

Phase One of the Navy's modernization program includes modification of the current 5 inch gun mount, improvements in supporting arms coordination and fire control systems, and the development of the Extended Range Guided Munition (ERGM), Land Attack Standard Missile (LASM), and Tactical Tomahawk (TACTOM). ERGM is a guided projectile fired from CG and DDG 5 inch 62 caliber gun systems with a range up to 63 nautical miles. LASM will be a supersonic surface to surface missile that will have a range far in excess of naval guns. It is intended to provide a highly responsive, accurate, all-weather means of addressing critical targets and providing support to Marines deployed outside the protective range of naval gunfire. C2 system improvements include the Naval Fires Control System (NFCS) on surface combatants and command platforms. Additionally, initiatives to integrate Navy and Marine supporting arms coordination systems on the command platforms are underway.

The second phase of NSFS modernization will be realized with the ZUMWALT Class Destroyer (DD 21) which is being developed from the keel up with a focus on enhancement of land-attack capabilities. The DD 21 will be constructed with the Advanced Gun System (AGS) and a land-attack missile capability expected to be based on an advanced LASM or Tomahawk weapon system. The AGS will be a 155mm system capable of firing twelve rounds per minute to ranges beyond 63 nautical miles. The land-attack missile will be designed to meet the needs of the MAGTF commander, and will provide increased range, accuracy, lethality, and responsiveness over that provided by LASM.

Marine Corps Position

Phase One of the Navy's modernization program will provide an interim NSFS capability. Phase Two will provide increased range, accuracy, lethality and responsiveness required to support NSFS. These improvements will give the MAGTF commander an essential capability for executing expeditionary operations.